PRESS RELEASE
September 7th 1981

Carl Harp, a revolutionary anarchist prisoner was murdered in his cell at the Washington State Penitentiary Sept. 5h. Three weeks previous, Harp was made aware of a contract out on his life by a member from a gang that refused the contract from their dope supplier — the guards. Another guard told Harp of the plot as well.

Harp made moves, distributing an open letter exposing the contract and checking into protective custody because he was too tired after all these years of fighting back, to adequatly protect himself. A week after entering protective custody, Harp felt confident enough to be released back into the general prison population. He was found dead, with his wrists slashed and hung by a telephone wire. He was housed in the tier which houses inmates before they reenter general population.

His reputation among prisoners who knew of him seemed solid: he never played games or ran scams against prisoners and often helped them out with their problems. But in prison, it doesn't take much at all to get killed with the State keeping conditions oppressive.

Harp was not beaten to death as in most prison killings, rather his death was executed to appear as suicide. There was even a suicide note supposedly written by Carl. Yet no one who knew Carl believed for an instant that his death was anything but murder.

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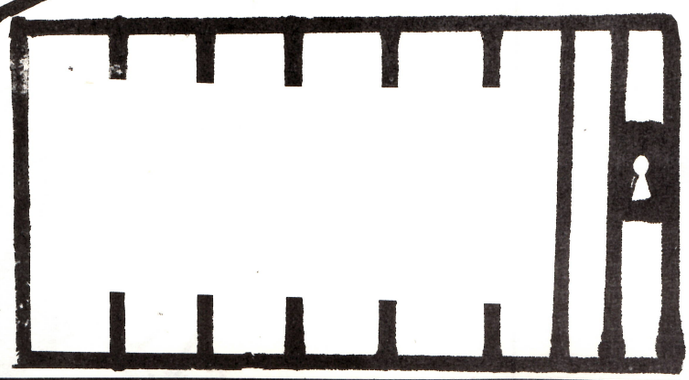

Here are some of the facts evident so far:

1) The cause of death hasn't yet been assessed.
2) No explanation has been given as to how his wrists were slashed.
3) Both his close friend and wife who saw the suicide note declared it a fake.
4) All who knew Harp were aware of his remarkable ability to stay balanced, fight hard when he had strength, deflect assaults when weak and lay low to regenerate his energy when tired. He had a lust for life.
5) His wife and I who last visited Carl, August 28th after he had demanded to get transferred back to general population, saw a person who felt very satisfied about his moves and was anticipating the future. He was also looking forward to the next issue of a newsletter he was involved in, the Anarchist Black Dragon, a certain big victory in an upcoming suit against the guards for a brutal beating he received 2 years ago, an appeal on his rape conviction by one of Washington's best attorneys, projects on publishing some of his writing, and of course, more visits from his wife now that he was back in Washington from California's San Quentin.
6) Lastly, Carl died alone. He vowed that if he ever would give it all up and commit suicide, he'd take a pig with him.

An autopsy will be done to determine the cause of his death, the FBI have been called in to investigate, some lawyers have come forward to help, and outside supporters are planing strategy to expose the complicity behind his murder, and the murder of hundreds of other inmates in the clutches of the State.

Biography: Born 1949 in Vancouver, Washington, Harp lived with his mother, who lived on welfare more often than not to survive. He went to prison for the first time at 15. By the time he was 23, he had been around the world three times, been in five more prisons in Mexico and Washington, spent time in Vietnam and had become a junky who kicked the habit.

At the age of 23, he was convicted and sentenced to four consecutive life terms for murder and rape. (The history of the trial and the proceedings clearly show he was railroaded by a State that needed a conviction, after blowing its case against the guilty party. Harp, outraged at his convictions, decided to fight back.

He evolved through constant and often intense struggle with the State into a revolutionary Anarchist. He developed remarkable skills to not only sustain his strength in the fight, but also enhance his love of life. He was hated and feared by the State because of his effectiveness confronting authority and educating others.

While many inmates would try to do "easy time", Carl never took life for granted . He did his time by churning out letters and articles to the outside, launching suits against the prison, helping other prisoners in their legal matters (and teaching some to read), being supportive and loving to friends, painting or drawing art, and reading and discussing political theory.

He put theory into action by helping found Men Against Sexism, a group established to help protect gay prisoners and educate others; participated in the intense strikes and rebellions Walla Walla prisoners waged against their captors; co-founded the Anarchist Black Dragon Collective – an underground political group inside, and their publication which is still continuing, the Anarchist Black Dragon.

Two years ago, Harp and two others seized the Classification Building and took ten staff hostages to force publicity and action on the dire lack of justice and human rights prisoners face. Harp refused to plead guilty, demanding a public political trial. The other two succumbed to the intense State pressure and pled guilty. Harp was then viciously beaten and raped with a riot baton by guards. After spending two weeks in a hospital, he was transferred against his will to San Quentin. He was told he would be killed there. News of his beating and transfer was publisized internationaly by outside supporters, and Harp launched suits seeking damages and a return to Walla Walla.

What followed was a slow parade of victories. Last year, a previous civil suit Harp and others launched saw the judge declare Walla Walla "cruel and unusual". Wishing to avoid being put on trial again, the State dropped the hostage charges against Harp. Then he was awarded $7,000 for being illegaly kept in segregation for 14 months. He then won his transfer back to Walla Walla recently and was preparing to go further, when the pigs, I assume deciding they could endure no more, killed him.

Personally, I of course feel the despair of loosing a wonderful friend and comrade – but just as strongly, I'm so damn happy to have known and worked with him. He showed me the potential of a revolutionary spirit-energy that can overcome forces much larger than you. He also showed the importance of outside solidarity and support towards the struggle on the inside, for no matter how strong the individual is, support from others is essential to be able to sustain the fight.

Presently, too little resistance is being mounted against the ruling classe's attacks. Reagan and Trudeau's gangs plan many more prisons and more sadistic punishment. the meaning of Carl Harp's life is obvious, there's no benifit in doing "easy time" – FIGHT BACK!

RON REID

For more information:
Solidary Committee
C.P. 2, Succ. La Cite
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 2M9

United Family & Friends of Prisoners
P.O Box 22094
Seattle, WA. 98112 USA

"D" is for daring. That's what it takes to be free... Carl Harp